

Housing Hopes



It was a celebration on the 16 July 2012—the General Meeting of members was the culmination of three Member Forums at Frankston (12 June) , Bentleigh (18 June) and Bayswater North (27 June) to discuss and agree on a submission to the Victorian Government consultation on social housing. At the General Meeting on 16 July 2012 members applauded the board and staff for their efforts in consulting members. See p 2 for General Meeting report. See p 6 on the SouthEast consultation process. See p 15 for a report on the Member Forums.

What's next?

The SouthEast board approved the submission on 27 July 2012. The Government received the submission on the 30 July 2012. Submissions closed on 31 July. See page 2 for a report of the meeting and pp. 12-14 for meeting pics. There are more pics on the website. See pp. 8 –9 for a summary of the submission approved by the meeting.



General Meeting



The General Meeting of 29 members of the SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd at the Dandenong Club on 16 July 2012 adopted a submission to the Victorian Government consultation on social housing - and applauded the work of the co-operative's officers, directors and staff, for the work involved in consulting members and drafting a submission.

It was a demanding meeting for members and officers of the co-operative - requiring the reading of over 4000 words of the Government's 25 questions and draft responses.

In commenting on the meeting, General Manager, Ian McLaren said, "It was a small but energetic group who actively participated in the process." Chairperson Shirley Faram said: "It was a positive meeting. There was a lot of interest. There was a lot of passion for the submission prepared in response to the Government's Discussion Paper. It gained the attention of everyone who was there and it resulted in a real sense of community and passion for the co-operative."

Shirley said that she received a lot of positive feedback from members at the end of the meeting e.g. "it was excellent, great work", "there was enough information to give a positive input" and "this is great work - for the co-operative."

Members at the meeting were asked to provide feedback. The overall rating for the meeting was Very Good 66.7% and Good 33.3%.

Information circulated before the meeting - 60% Very Helpful and 40% Helpful

Presentation at the meeting - 60% Very Helpful and 35% Helpful.

Discussion at the meeting - 55% Very Helpful and 45% Helpful

Venue for the meeting - 52.3% Very Good and 42.9% Good.

Location for the meeting - 52.3% Very Good and 9 Good.

For pictures from the General Meeting go to pp. 12-14. There are also 24 pictures on the website: <http://www.sehc.org.au>

Housing Provider Framework

Properties managed by SouthEast on behalf of the Department of Human services are governed by a Housing Provider framework (HPF) lease. We have been informed that the current HPF which expires in December 2012 will be extended to June 2014. It is a reasonable result pending the outcome of the Victorian Government's consultation on social housing.

Privacy: SouthEast is committed to protecting your privacy and complying with all applicable privacy laws. If you have any questions or comments about our privacy practices, we can be contacted at PO Box 7141, Dandenong Phone: 3175. 03 9706 8005. Fax 03 9706 8558

Housing Futures Survey

There were 68 responses received – a 42.7 % response rate from 159 households.

The survey has confirmed that the aim of making the newsletter more accessible and accountable has succeeded.

Over 64.7 % read all the newsletter and a majority of 55.9 % retain copies. The overall view of the newsletter is positive - 17.6 % Excellent, 35.3 % Very Good and 41.2% Good. The overall view of articles was 11.7 % Excellent, 38.2 % Very Good and 39.7 % Good.

For views on the coverage of board issues, tenancy issues, maintenance issues and co-operatives and co-operation:

Board Issues – 9 (13.2 %) Excellent, 21 (30.9 %) Very Good, 26 (38.2 %) Good and 6 (8.8%) Average. **Maintenance Issues**—13 (19.1 %) Excellent, 12 (17.6 %) Very Good, 28 (41.1 %) and 7 (10.3 %) Average. **Tenancy Issues**—13 (19.1 %) Excellent, 11 (17.6 %) Very Good, 28 (41.1 %) Good and 7 (10.3 %) Average. **Co-operatives and Co-operation**—12 (17.6 %) Excellent, 23 (33.8 %) Very Good, 27 (39.7 %) Good and 5 (7.3 %) average.



MEMBER MATTERS

In response to the question, should members be allowed to put free ads in the newsletter, 51 (75%) said yes.

There was even stronger support for member contributions to the newsletter. In response to the question: Would you like to see contributions by members to the newsletter? 82.35% said yes.

In response to the question: Would you be willing to contribute to the newsletter? 18 (26.5%) said yes. Seven members who provided their names are being followed-up and invited to contribute to the September issue of Housing Futures based on the guidelines adopted for the web site. These members are being written to and provided with a copy of the guidelines.



Newsletter Contributors

Guidelines have been developed for contributions to the newsletter:

1. An article is not automatically published. It is subject to approval.
1. Articles will be either approved or not approved. They will not be edited.
2. Articles that involve personal attacks or that are hurtful and insulting will not be approved.
3. A swear word may work in an article but gratuitous profanity will not be approved.
4. Don't write your whole comment or blog in capital letters.
5. Articles should be brief and should not exceed 250 words.
6. Articles that contain racist, sexist or homophobic remarks or could be interpreted as such will not be approved.
7. Try to explain your arguments so that other readers can understand what point you are making.
8. Defamatory articles are unacceptable and will not be approved.
9. Articles from or on behalf of companies or businesses that advertise their products and/or services will not be approved.
11. Comments on published articles that do not contribute to the discussion will not be approved.

BOARD MEETING PUBLIC RECORD

01 JUNE 2012

THIS PUBLIC RECORD OF A BOARD
MEETING ON 01 JUNE 2012 WAS
APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON 029
JUNE 2012 AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE
REPORT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE ON
THE SEHC WEB SITE

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON SOCIAL HOUSING

It was noted that the process and outcome could be critical to the future of co-operative housing.

The board endorsed the organisation of three Member Forums and a General Meeting of members.

There was discussion on a draft submission that was being prepared.

AUSTRALIAN COOPERATORS

It was agreed to support in principle a publication of the views of 15-20 co-operators on what co-operation and co-operatives meant to them.

A final decision on whether or not to proceed with the publication will be made at the August 2012 board meeting.

Board Meeting Public Records

Members are reminded that public records of board meetings are on the SouthEast web site. The record is formally approved by the board as accurate at the subsequent board meeting and, then, uploaded to the site.

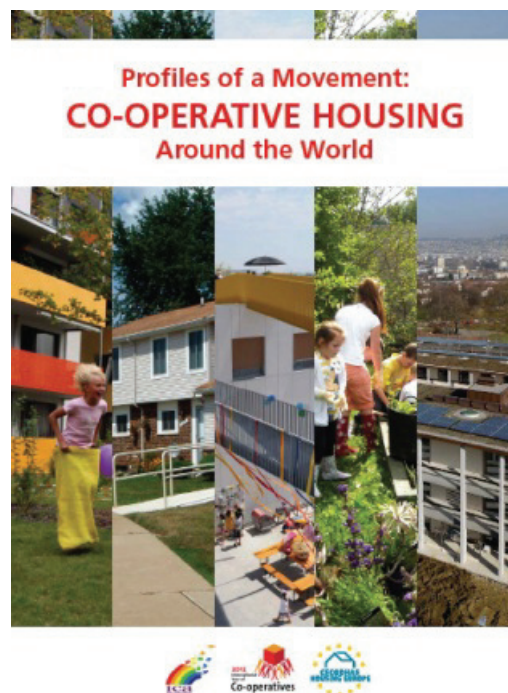
The first public record was for the 24 June 2011 board meeting. Since then, 11 public records of meetings have been uploaded to the site at <http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/board/public-records>

SouthEast Website

Between 3 June—27 July 2012 there were 280 visitors to the SouthEast web site making 443 visits to 1741 pages. There were 417 visits from Australia .

Contributions: SouthEast welcomes member contributions to the newsletter. Interested members should contact the General Manager Ian McLaren - 9706 8005.

Co-op Housing throughout the World was published this year and provides a unique perspective on the extent and depth of housing co-operatives throughout the world—over 210,000 housing co-operatives with 18 million properties and 27 million members. A housing co-operative is a housing business that is a consumer co-operative mutually owned by its members, which complies with the International Co-operative Alliance's (ICA) Statement of Co-operative Identity and operates in accordance with the ICA's Co-operative Principles and Values. There are different co-operative housing models in different countries, but what characterises housing co-operatives compared to other housing providers is that they are jointly owned and democratically controlled.



Profiles of a Movement: Co-operative Housing Around the World has been published jointly by CECODHAS housing Europe and ICA Housing. It represents a first effort to present the current realities of co-operative housing throughout world,.

Housing co-operatives: People first!

Housing co-operatives around the world take three main forms: rental, limited equity and market value. They can also vary in the type of buildings they own and manage, from high rise buildings to single family homes and from urban to rural locations. Housing co-operatives also use different financial mechanisms dependent upon the economic and political realities that surround them. But above all, they share one fundamental element: the members collectively own and/or manage the housing in which their members live. It is not just another place to stay; it is home.

Co-operative ownership of housing means:

Affordability – Fair, affordable and viable rents are the goal; the motive being to provide a housing service to the members rather than to generate profit for an external third party. Without fear of having to move for economic reasons, they seek to offer security of tenure.

Commitment to social goals – Engagement with and support for the surrounding community's concerns and projects is made easier. Through the co-operative, members become aware of local social issues and decide to act together with their communities. Actions by individuals can be difficult but housing co-operatives have proved numerous times that together projects can be accomplished for the well being of the community.

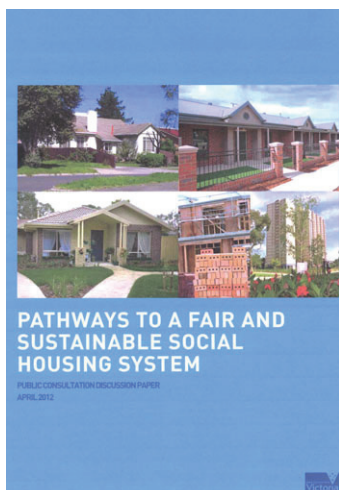
Personal growth – Housing co-operative members develop new skills and confidence as they deal with finances, buildings and people. Training is offered to the co-operative's members and networking, capacity building and information sharing bring new learning opportunities for them. Members' personal development through participation in the co-operative benefits individuals and the whole community and often leads to the opportunity to apply new skills to employment and job creation.

Decent place to live – As owners, members balance their priorities and the co-operative's budget. They can tailor their needs with their wants and search for long lasting benefits. Modern properties, homes with enough personal space, communal space for social activities and appropriate landscaping allowing children and adults to play; these are things that people can better achieve in a co-operative environment.

Security – Knowing your neighbours and pursuing the same goals make for safer communities. The management structure of co-operatives gives members the ability to address security issues and implement solutions for the benefit of all.

Transparency in management – Members have control of and democratic decision making power over the affairs of the cooperative. Elected leaders and staff must report to the members regularly. Major decisions must receive the approval of the members: a good and accountable way to ensure efficient and proper management.

Victorian Government Consultation on Social Housing



On 30 April 2012, the Minister for Housing Wendy Lovell announced the Victorian Government public consultation on the future direction of social housing.

The Minister for Housing released two papers, which bring together a range of ideas to promote public discussion:

[*Pathways to a fair and sustainable social housing system \(PDF 2.4 MB\)*](#)

[*Social Housing - Options to improve the supply of quality housing \(PDF 2.0 MB\)*](#)

Public consultation closed on 31 July 2012. Announcements relating to the next steps will be made following the consultation process.

SouthEast Consultation

SouthEast has completed an extensive consultation process with members of the co-operative through:

Six articles on the SouthEast web site between 30 April and 6 July 2012. As of 27 July 2012, there were more than 175 views of these articles on the web site.

Two special consultation issues of the Housing Futures newsletter on 22 May and 5 June 2012.

Three Member Forums on 12 June (Frankston), 18 June (Bentleigh) and 27 June (Bayswater North) attended by a total of 23 members.

A General Meeting of 29 members on 16 July 2012.

The agenda for the General Meeting was circulated before the meeting and included the draft minutes of the three member forums and a draft submission to the Victorian Government.

Contributions: SouthEast would welcome member contributions to the newsletter. Interested members should contact the General Manager Ian McLaren—9706 8005.

SouthEast Pathways Response

On pp. 7—8 the SouthEast submission to the Victorian Government consultation on social housing is summarised. The full submission can be accessed on www.sehc.org.au

What is the role of government?

The government should adopt four basic principles—affordable and secure housing as a right, affordable and secure housing should be universally available, social housing should provide a diversity of housing models and the co-operative housing model is a key model that can either be a pathway or a destination for tenants.

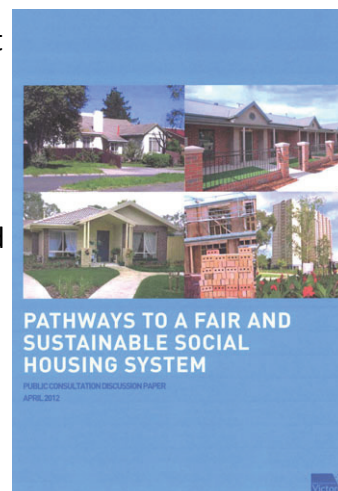
How could the allocation of public housing be made fairer?

Public housing is not a pathway to private housing. Affordable and secure housing is a right - not a privilege. The review of tenants should be based on income—not tenancy. Affordable and secure housing is a right and not a privilege.

How could the public housing system be made more flexible?

It is fallacious to conclude that public housing tenants are dependent because they are public housing tenants. Tenants in private housing are not independent. Over the decade to 2012, rents across Australia rose 81% and earnings 50%. Over 150,000 people in private rental are paying more than 50% of their income on housing costs.

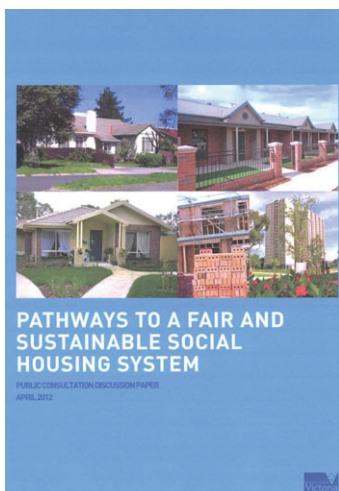
Continued on p. 8



“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 25.1)

SouthEast Pathways Response



How could tenure be made fairer?

Different tenure arrangements will introduce bureaucratic procedures and judgements e.g. the definition and interpretation of a tenant being well-placed. Limited tenure is inappropriate for co-operative housing.

How can public housing be made fairer for tenants?

A housing safety-net overrides work, education and training.

Public housing is not a disincentive. There are disincentives within the labor market. It is not clear what distinction is being made between short-term and long-term needs. It is reasonable to expect a tenant to be of good standing but not because public housing is a privilege.

How can good tenant behaviour and mutual obligation be incentivised?

Question is patronising—assuming tenants are privileged and don't know how to behave. The SouthEast experience is that most members are good neighbours.

How can the supply of quality social housing be improved?

Ownership is critical to quality. Ownership in a co-operatives enhances the maintenance of quality housing. SouthEast is already efficient and financially sustainable compared with public housing.

General Response

The discussion paper does not recognise the experience and extent of co-operative housing throughout the world—over 210,000 housing co-operatives with more than 18 million properties and 27 million members.

The questions throughout the discussion paper are based on subjective values and assumptions.

The SouthEast submission is on the website:

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/news/meetings/485-subgovt>

Communications

Terms of reference have been established for the Communications Working Party. It will report to the board on:

The efficacy of communications and consultation with members policy and procedures of SouthEast.

The development and implementation of Member Forums, General Meetings and Communication media.

Member needs and wishes and policies and practices that reflect and reinforce these.

The full terms of reference are on the web site.

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/meetings/cwp>



Dale Carroll, Compliance and Development Officer, discusses with Ian McLaren, General Manager, the next meeting of the Communications Working Party.

CHFV COHSG

There was a meeting of the Community Housing Federation of Victoria's (CHFV) Co-operative Housing Sector Group (COHSG) on Wednesday, 1 August 2012 at the new SouthEast office located in the Plaza Business Centre, Palm Plaza (26 to 36 McCrae St). Dandenong.

There were 13 co-operators at the meeting representing SouthEast, CEHL, North Geelong RHC, Northcote RHC, Williamstown RHC, Eastern Suburbs RHC, United Housing RHC, and staff from the CHFV including the new Executive Officer Lesley Dredge.

Issues considered included the co-ops and the CHFV responses to the Pathways Discussion Paper, the Housing Provider Framework leases extension and the Chintaro database.

Housing Registrar Survey

There were 66 responses to the Housing Registrar survey on Housing Services, Consideration of Views Maintenance and Repairs.

Housing Services—Very Satisfied 42, Fairly Satisfied 17, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied 6, Fairly Dissatisfied 1

Consideration of Views—Very Satisfied 32, Fairly Satisfied 20, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied 8, Fairly Dissatisfied 3, Very Dissatisfied 1 and No Opinion 2

Maintenance and Repairs—Very Satisfied 37, Fairly Satisfied 17, Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied 6, Fairly Dissatisfied 5, Very Dissatisfied 1



The SouthEast films were uploaded to YouTube on 27—29 February 2012. At the 04 August 2012 The Other Way Home documentary had been viewed 980 times— a total of more than 11400 minutes or 199 hours

Total You Tube views—2775

The Trailer (912)

<http://youtu.be/z1Y813L-xR4> 2m

The Other Way Home (984)

<http://youtu.be/9R4ZCACLgJE> 12m 41s

Advertorial—Co-operation Works (879)

<http://youtu.be/x59NDnT3apo> 30s

Numbers in brackets—times viewed as at 04 August 2012.

A Good History Lesson!!!

There is an old Hotel/Pub in Marble arch, London which used to have gallows adjacent. Prisoners were taken to the gallows (after a fair trial of course to be hung. The horse drawn dray, carting the prisoner was accompanied by an armed guard, who would stop the dray outside the pub and ask the prisoner if he would like “ONE LAST DRINK”

If he said YES it was referred to as “ONE FOR THE ROAD.”

If he declined, the prisoner was referred to as “ON THE WAGON.”

So there you go. More bleeding history.

Bad News Mrs. Ward

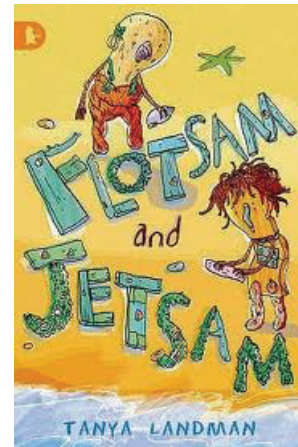
“Bad news Mrs. Ward,” a doctor tells an elderly lady: “We sent your husband’s test sample to the lab yesterday but there was a specimen from another Mr. Ward and they got mixed up. I’m sorry—although both results were awful.”

“What do you mean?” asks the lady.

“One specimen tested positive for dementia and the other for a sexually transmitted disease. We’ll test him again but the results won’t come back for a month.”

“What do I do until then?”

“Drop him off in the middle of the bush. If he finds his way home, don’t sleep with him.”



Most marriages break up for religious reasons. He thinks he’s a god and, well, she just doesn’t.

Kathy Letter

Some people see things as they are and ask why, others dream things that never were and ask why not.

Pathways—More Responses

Sector Response

The co-operative housing sector has made a joint submission to the Victorian Government's consultation on social housing—submitted on behalf of the rental housing co-operatives, including SouthEast Housing Co-operative Ltd, and Common Equity Housing Limited. The submission argues that rental housing co-operatives are fair and sustainable enterprises that:

The submission argues that the key achievements of rental housing co-operatives are financial sustainability and the delivery of social and economic benefits. These outcomes depend strongly on a viable tenant mix, providing security of tenure to households and building the capacity of tenant members to participate in the management of their co-operatives.

The submission proposes that rental housing co-operatives, as financially sustainable models of social housing provision, play an important role in improving access to secure and affordable housing for low income households in Victoria, delivering social and economic benefits for tenant members and government, and adding to the mix of social housing choices in the Victorian social housing.

A Submission from the Rental Housing Co-operatives Sector

in response to the Victorian Government's Public Consultation Papers:

Pathways to a Fair and Sustainable Social Housing System, April 2012 and

Social Housing, a Discussion Paper on the Options to Improve the Supply of Quality Housing, KPMG, April 2012

The Rental Housing Co-operatives sector welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Victorian Government's discussion papers on the future of the social housing system in Victoria, and to further discuss its future role in the provision of social housing with Government.

This submission proposes that Rental Housing Co-operatives, as financially sustainable models of social housing provision, play an important role in improving access to secure and affordable housing for low income households in Victoria, delivering social and economic benefits for tenant members and Government; and add to the mix of housing choices in the Victorian social housing system.

CHFV Response

In its submission, the Community Housing Federation of Victoria Ltd argues that rental housing co-operatives are tenant-led that need to retain the ability to select members and that the co-operatives are a form of long-term housing that requires members who are able to contribute to the co-operative to do so. The submission further argues that for the rental housing co-operatives provision of good tenant services is a vital part of business and that the co-operatives operate an effective and efficient business.



Response to the State Government's Discussion Paper
"Pathways to a Fair and Sustainable Social Housing System"





There was a time to read

GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS 16 JULY 2012



There was a time to listen.

Visit the website for information on:

Maintenance Services—<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/maintenance>

Tenancy Services—<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/tenancy>

Services Charter—<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/services/services-charter>



There was a time to speak.

GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS 16 JULY 2012



There was a time to vote.

Future board meetings— 31 August and 28 September 2012

More information—General Manager Ian McLaren



There was a time to explain.

GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

16 JULY 2012



Management Matters

The Problem of Success

The Housing Registrar has been critical of SouthEast for the low response rate from members to satisfaction surveys compared with other agencies. It was 40% in 2010 and 18.12% in 2011. For the Housing Registrar, this could indicate we are not effectively engaging with our members and the responses have been so low that the representativeness of the surveys and, therefore, their value is limited.

The responses to the Housing Futures and Housing Registrar surveys this year, however, have been excellent—with returns of 68 (42.67%) and 66 (41.51%) respectively. I would like to thank members for their co-operation with these two surveys.

This year's success, however, could be next year's problem if we don't match or exceed the response rate to any surveys in 2013.

Ian McLaren
General Manager

MEMBER FORUMS

Page 15

Three Member Forums preceded the General Meeting of Members on 16 July 2012: The Chairperson Shirley Faram, General Manager Ian McLaren, Tenancy Worker Joy Haines, Board Director Jan Dickson and David Griffiths. Attended all Forums.

During the Member Forums , member insights included the following:

“if we don’t jump up and down and say here we are—we’ll” be thrown out with the bathwater”

“we need to highlight it’s a model that works”

“you can stay as long as you need”

“housing is a pimple on the bum of government”

“we need to be really clear on what we stand for”

“it works”

Frankston Member Forum 12
June 2012



Bentleigh Member Forum 18
June 2012



Bayswater North Member
Forum 27 June 2012



The Member Forums agreed that - co-operative housing is primarily a destination, that there should be a universal right to affordable and secure housing, that there should be more co-operative housing opportunities, that the experience of SouthEast proves that the co-operative housing model works and that the ultimate goal of Government should be to support diverse and mixed housing.

Call for Nominations

Nominations are called for one member director position on the board to be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting on 19 November 2012. The board has nine directors—seven member directors and two independent directors. Six of the member directors are still serving their three year terms and the two independent directors are appointed by the board. Nomination papers are being distributed with this newsletter. Nominations close on 31 August 2012.

David Griffiths
Returning Officer

SouthEast will have two representatives at the National Co-operatives Conference on 24—25 October 2012 at Port Macquarie, NSW.



RENT REVIEW

SouthEast undertakes income and rent reviews every 12 months. The review requires all members to provide income information for all household members who are 18 years or over.

At the completion of the review, the amount will be calculated and members receive 60 days notice advising the date and amount that will be required to be paid.

When requested, members must provide the information on income by the due date or it will be assumed that members no longer require rebated rent and will be charged cost rent.

In a letter of 28 March 2012 members were informed about this year's rent review and requested that the information be provided by 16 April 2012.

The letter reminded members that they had to complete two forms - Household Particulars Form and a Statutory Declaration Form. Members are also required to provide income information from all sources of household income.

It is disappointing to report that by the 16 April 2012 deadline about 40% of members had not returned their rent review form. At the 16 July 2012 there were a few members who had still not submitted their forms.

More tenancy news:

<http://www.sehc.org.au/index.php/news/tenancy>

CO-OPERATORS BOOKLET

The board agreed on the 27 July 2012 to proceed with publishing a co-operation booklet.

I am a Co-operator will include articles by co-operators on co-operation and co-operatives.

Members and staff of SouthEast have contributed to the booklet.

All members will be given a copy of the booklet. The booklet will also be distributed at three national co-operative conferences—two in Australia and one in the UK. The booklet will also be sold in the Rochdale Museum, Rochdale, UK.

CO-OP NEWS

Go to the SouthEast web site and click on the top menu NEWS for news about board, communications, co-operation, complaints, government, surveys, tenancy and meetings.

<http://www.sehc.org.au>

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